

the opportunity to have their children opt out. This isn't burdensome; it's the morally right thing to do. If public school officials exercised this courtesy in the first place, the Chelmsford controversy could have been avoided.

I believe the courts should return to the spirit of the Supreme Court decisions on parental rights, and recognize and protect the right of parents to direct the religious upbringing of their children. The U.S. Constitution requires no less. Meanwhile, Congress should consider legislation, such as Senator GRASSLEY's parental rights bill, to prod the courts to respect one of the most basic, and important fundamental rights.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia [Mr. ROCKEFELLER], is recognized to speak for up to 15 minutes under the previous order.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. ROCKEFELLER pertaining to the introduction of S. 1963 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER [Mr. BROWN]. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I have been presiding, and I know that we are going to be continuing with the defense appropriations bill later on. I noticed something that I read just in the last couple days that was in the Wall Street Journal under the title of "Do We Need a Missile Defense?" This has been a debate in this body for quite some time during the Defense authorization bill. It is so obvious on its face, that virtually every strategist, in terms of strategic defense in the country, agrees that we are under probably a greater threat today than we have been maybe in the history of this country in that we no longer are in a cold-war posture where there are two superpowers and you can identify who the other one is, as it was in the case of the cold war.

Some of us, I think, may be looking back wistfully at the days when there was a cold war and we could identify who the enemy was. I can recall that back during the Nixon administration, Richard Nixon and Dr. Kissinger put together the whole concept of the ABM Treaty, which was there are only two superpowers that have weapons of mass destruction and the missile means to deliver them, at least part way. Therefore, if we all agree not to defend our-

selves, then the philosophy of mutual assured destruction would serve us all well. In other words, the Soviets fire at us, we fire at them, everybody dies and no one is happy.

That is not the situation today. I did not agree with it back in 1972. Back when we had the ratification of the START II agreement, I was the only Senator halfway through the rollcall to vote against it. Everyone else was voting for it until a few others realized that what we were doing is going back and reinstating or resurrecting that philosophy of the ABM Treaty, except now it would be with Russia as opposed to the Soviet Union since it no longer exists.

I think it is insane that we would even consider something like that. In fact, I had permission from Henry Kissinger himself to stand on the Senate floor and quote him when he said that he did agree at the time that that was a good policy for America in 1972, but he said that now some 25 nations have weapons of mass destruction, and he said, "It is nuts to make a virtue out of our vulnerability."

This article that I read—I will, without exceeding my time, just paraphrase a few of the comments here by some of the experts. Donald Rumsfeld was the Secretary of Defense during the Ford administration. He said:

Only someone deep in denial can contend that the U.S. cannot be threatened by ballistic missiles. Rogue states like Iran, Iraq and North Korea have made clear their determination to acquire chemical, biological or nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them. China and Russia, if inclined, could threaten many countries, near and far, with nuclear missiles. Missiles are a weapon of choice for intimidation, precisely because the world knows that once a missile is launched, the U.S. is not capable of stopping it.

Henry F. Cooper was the director of the Strategic Defense Initiative during the Bush administration and the chief U.S. negotiator in the Geneva defense and space talks during the Reagan administration. He said—I will just quote this first sentence:

America's vulnerability to ballistic missile attack is a leadership failure of potentially disastrous proportions.

Then it goes on to quote many others, including James Woolsey, who was President Clinton's former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and now practices law in Washington. He was the one who 2 years ago said that—this was 2 years ago—we now have 22, 25 nations that have weapons of mass destruction or are in the final stages of completing those weapons and are working on the missile means of deploying them, delivering them.

I think, Mr. President, if you update his statement, as he did the other day, it is now up to some 30 nations. Look at who these nations are. When you are dealing with the Middle East mentality of Iran, Iraq, and Syria and Lebanon and Libya, and, of course, people like Saddam Hussein, who would murder his own grandchildren, we are not dealing

with people that we can predict, people who think like Westerners think. Yet here we are today considering the defense appropriations bill and giving virtually no attention to our ability to defend ourselves with a national missile defense system.

So, Mr. President, I am hoping, as we keep repeating this over and over again, that we can penetrate somehow this Eastern media who would like to make people believe that the threat is not out there, this administration that keeps saying over and over again that it will be 15 years before we can be threatened by a missile attack, when in fact there are intercontinental ballistic missiles that can reach the United States from as far away as China or Russia.

We have been held hostage. We were held hostage in the Taiwan Strait when the Chinese went over and were doing their missile experimentation. One of the highest ranking Chinese officials at that time said, "We're not concerned about the Americans coming in and defending Taipei because they would rather defend Los Angeles than they would Taipei." That has to be at least an indirect threat at the United States.

The threat is real. The danger is real. We are living in a time when the threat is greater than it has been at any time in this country's history. We, as a body, are trying to do something about it against the wishes of the administration, and we have to prevail in this effort for our kids' sake.

Lastly, I am from Oklahoma, and those who saw the Murrah Federal Office Building and saw the television accounts of it—you almost had to be there to get the full impact of the tragedy that was there. It was just indescribable. The power of that bomb that blew up the Murrah Federal Office Building in Oklahoma City was equal to 1 ton of TNT. The smallest nuclear warhead known to man is 1 kiloton, 1,000 times the explosive power. So the threat is there, Mr. President. We need to deal with that and do something about it. After all, is that not what Government is for? I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Utah is recognized.

THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION IN AMERICA

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, you and some others in this body have heard me say that the one experience that took me out of the private sector and brought me back into public life was my term as chairman of the Strategic Planning Commission for the Utah State Board of Education. I was